

Fibroscan

Liver nursing team [Patient information](#)

Having a fibroscan

This information sheet has been given to you to explain what a fibroscan involves and why it is being recommended for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to one of the team caring for you.

What is a fibroscan and why do I need one?

Your doctor or specialist nurse has recommended you have this test to help us understand the condition of your liver. A fibroscan is a way to measure the 'stiffness' of your liver, which reflects the degree of fibrosis (scarring) and steatosis (fat) in the liver.

What are the benefits of this scan?

Having a fibroscan will help your doctor or specialist nurse understand how much scarring or fat is in your liver. This will help them to plan your care and treatment.

A fibroscan is a quick test that does not have any potential complications or risks and is non-invasive, which means it does not break the skin or enter your body.

Are there any alternatives to a fibroscan?

Your doctor or nurse will explain any alternatives available to you in detail.

One option is to have a liver biopsy. This is where a small sample of liver tissue is removed with a needle. A liver biopsy has several disadvantages - for example, you need to stay in hospital for several hours after the procedure. It also carries several risks, such as internal bleeding after the biopsy.

We cannot use a fibroscan to monitor scarring in all liver conditions. A liver biopsy may be recommended to patients following their fibroscan as a more appropriate method of assessment.

Are there any special precautions?

You cannot have a fibroscan if you have ascites (a build-up of fluid that causes your abdomen to swell). Please speak to your doctor or nurse if you think this applies to you.

How do I prepare for the scan?

Please do not eat or drink anything for three hours before your fibroscan. If you need to, you can take small sips of water or clear fluid but avoid drinking large amounts. You should continue taking any prescribed medication. If you are diabetic and concerned about fasting for three hours, please contact your diabetic nurse.

You will not need to remove any clothing for the scan, but we will need to expose the right side of your abdomen (tummy). Therefore, we recommend that you do not wear a dress on the day of the test. You will not need to remove any jewellery near the site of the scan, such as a belly button piercing.

What happens during the scan?

You will be asked to lie on your back, and to place your right arm above your head. The person performing the scan will feel your abdomen to find where to place the fibroscan probe. A gel will be applied to your skin. The fibroscan probe will be placed on the right side of your abdomen, around to the side and between your ribs. A small amount of pressure will be applied to ensure good contact with the skin.

The operator will then press a button on the side of the probe which triggers a pulse to be sent through your liver. This will give a score that is used to assess scarring and fat in the liver. It will feel like a gentle flick against your skin and will be done at least 10 times to make sure an accurate result is achieved. It should not hurt and will make no noise.



How long will the scan take?

The fibroscan is very quick, please allow 20 minutes for the appointment.

When will I get the results?

The result will be sent to the doctor or specialist nurse who referred you for the fibroscan and you will be contacted with a plan for your future care, or they will discuss it with you at your next outpatient appointment.

Will my data be shared?

University Hospitals Dorset is a teaching hospital, and we may use your anonymised data for training and research purposes. If you do not wish for your data to be used, please let a member of the team know. For further information please refer to our hospital website: www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit.

Questions about the appointment

Fibroscans are performed at both Royal Bournemouth and Poole Hospital. Please read your appointment letter carefully for the location of your appointment. If you need to cancel or change your fibroscan, please contact the number on the appointment letter.

If you have questions before your appointment, please call:




The liver nursing team Royal Bournemouth: **0300 019 4886**
or the clinical measurement team Poole: **0300 019 2590**

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To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499** or email patientexperienceteam@uhd.nhs.uk.

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